

so notoriously dull. To abstain from casting our pearls before swine may be excellent in theory, and I will concede that there are subjects too holy and sacred and private to cheapen to the crowd. But our best pearls of expression are not likely to be too good even for our fellow-creatures—we so often mistake our grains of corn for pearls, and corn is very fattening for pigs!

The following suggestion is a last desperate attempt to restore conversation to at least some place in our social functions. We have had "book teas" and "celebrity teas" and "photograph teas," why not try a "conversation tea"? Let each guest arrive labelled with the subject on which he or she is prepared to converse with the greatest readiness. Let the hostess shuffle duplicate cards in a bag and then draw them out in pairs—as, let us say, "The present state of the Marriage Laws," and "Old English part-singing." The persons representing these subjects then retire into two chairs together, and, at the expiration of half-an-hour, each person will be asked how many points of agreement (or disagreement) they have found. The proud possessor of the greater number of points carrying off the now inevitable prize. It might lead to the formation of a regular debating society where men, women, and children might meet as souls, minds, or spirits without odious social complications—it might lead to everyone becoming very bored and saying "Oh, can't we have Bridge now?" Our tongues are often the busiest parts of ourselves—is it too much to plead that we should seek to revive the art of its use and endeavour to cultivate its activities?

R.A.P.

Pennethorne

SPORT.

THERE is perhaps no ideal so universal to boyhood as that of becoming a "sportsman"—no term that so aptly describes a boy's hero, comprising all the virtues, powers, and ideals to which he aspires. What do we women understand by the word? A "sportsman" is a man who always does the straight thing, who knows no fear, physical or moral, who is in all things keen.

"A thorough sportsman." What a picture of an upright, healthy, vigorous, loyal Englishman the words call up! A man whose sense of fair play forms an integral part of his life, who is quite as ready to own himself wrong as he was to prove himself right. Whose love for all living things, and tenderness for all young things, is not one whit lessened by a cheerful capacity for killing, in a most workmanlike manner, pheasants in October and rats all the year round.

A man who plays all games to win, including the game of Life. Who loses without bitterness and wins without pride. A man capable in much, modest in all. What an ideal for a boy! What a citizen for a country! Such we would make our boys—such we would keep them. But all these virtues I have cited have not much surface connection with "sport." Sport means horse-racing, and grouse-driving and salmon fishing, and yachting and hunting, and guns and gloves and flies, and pink papers and check suits, and unintelligible slang, and half a page in the morning daily.

But to our sportsmen it means more. It means hard living and clean thoughts. Keen observation and many truths humbly learnt therefrom. It means self-control, that keystone to the arch of a good life. Physical control, the result of a body trained and kept in training; eyes and hands and legs and back each answering promptly to the brain's command. Moral control that regards the least deviation from the path of honour and truthfulness as impossible. Mental control that keeps purity of thought as much a matter of course as healthiness of body. Perhaps not brilliant, but

always thorough. Sport means hard work which is keen pleasure—a vivid joy in life which makes no day ugly and all things interesting. For a sportsman is never bored, save by such a dose of the banalities of those who cannot reach his soul that even his serenity gets ruffled.

But I go on too fast. Our work is to train children not to study men. True, the one is impossible without the other, yet the latter is the means, not the end. We have formulated our ideal sportsman, he is there at the end of that long lane of education we are starting some one's eager feet upon. How did he manage it? What were the phases of his evolution? Those uncomfortable crazes, those untidy masses, that surprising disregard for time and clothes that worry us so in our boys—had they anything in common with our hero's evolution? Should we feel hurt if we discovered these identical?

Boys learn so much from such queer things. Catapulting, for instance. In the last eight weeks I have watched a boy make strides of development through the stormy possession of a catapult. His eye improved in aim; his judgment, of distance, of the curve of the shot according to the size and shape of the stone, of when to aim slow and when to pelt. His observation of the habits of sparrows and starlings, of the growth of horse-chestnuts and ash—the former as a mark, the latter providing material for a second “straddle.” Lessons in common-sense, when a bottle placed against a house “full of windows” was not approved of by the powers as a target. Patience and perseverance came in too, and a boy who forgets to come in to tea has to do without it, so grows fortitude. Yet I used to regard a catapult as an unholy instrument of mischief and a mighty stone to be rolled out of the road that led to my hero. Then there is the games period. The runs that So-and-So can get on his particular style of wicket, and the unmovableness of Such-a-one as “goal,” is all the conversation that is obtainable from this period, and it is only wrung out in jerks by hard questionings. These boys read the golden words of C. B. Fry with absorption and spend the holidays in practising “leg-breaks” or “punting.”

It is splendid, that games period, and makes our men such good-tempered soldiers and so hard to confess themselves beaten.

Then there is the ratting period that comes with a closer connection with the village poacher and the possession of a

“keen” fox-terrier. It is trying; ferrets are so unpleasant, and bloody hands so nasty, and we think it dull to sit half-an-hour by a hole in a bank watching for something that never comes out. But the educational value is enormous. I could go on endlessly. Each holiday brings its own stage and its own friend. Now it is the coachman, now the keeper, then the vet, each giving his share to our educational scheme, and each getting into focus with time. And the sum of it all is “sport,” and the honour and the truth, and the courage and the tolerance, and the love that is knowledge, and the strength that is gentleness, make our “Sportsman.”

“THERE IS GREAT ENJOYMENT IN WORK.”

IN *our* work, especially, I think we shall all endorse Miss Clough's statement, although possibly some are happier than others in their environment. For myself “the lines have fallen unto me in” very “pleasant places,” and it is thought that my fellow-workers may like to hear a short account of our little school begun here last September (1900) through the interest and with the help of Miss H. L. R. Harvey, who wanted a P.N.E.U. class to be formed on account of a little niece and who therefore wrote to Miss Mason on the subject.

One must admit, even after having lived in Ambleside, that Englefield Green is a very pretty place. Owing to its healthy situation, as well as its natural beauty, houses are in great request, and it seemed at first as if the want of house room would be an insuperable difficulty. But a friend most generously offered to lend her charming old-fashioned furnished cottage for some months! While I was thinking this over another friend proposed sending her two little girls as boarders; these, with four day pupils, formed the nucleus, and thus the school began, although my original intention had been to have a morning class for non-resident children only. One other thing led to further development, viz., the